

The Judgment Seat Of Christ

by David J. Stewart | November 2005

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." —2nd Corinthians 5:10

Please notice in the above Scripture the phrase, **"whether it be good OR BAD."** Many believers have the ignorant belief that Jesus will simply reward us for the good we do in life, but not mention the bad. This misconception comes from a misunderstanding about Biblical justice. "Justice" is often symbolized by a scale. Before we were saved, our sins weighed down heavily upon one end of the scale and we were found guilty. The Word of God indicts (brings formal charges against) mankind (Romans 3:19). Jeremiah 17:10, **"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."**



Thankfully, Jesus Christ came before the Judge (i.e., God the Father, the Prosecutor) and volunteered to balance the scale by shedding His own blood upon the cross (Romans 5:9). Ephesians 2:13, **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."** Thus, eternal life is a free gift available to all (Romans 10:13). The redemptive work of Christ has made salvation freely available to all who want it. Revelation 22:17, **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."** Amen!

God will judge every man, individually, according to his work. Of course, this speak of Christians. 1st Peter 1:16, **"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."** The unsaved will not be rewarded for any good they do. Ezekiel 33:Eze:33:13: **When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.**

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Criminal Verses Civil Court

There are different scales of justice. The best example I can give you is our own present day court system. There are criminal courts, civil courts, administrative hearing courts, etc. When O. J. Simpson was tried for murder, he was acquitted in criminal court; but

was then later found guilty in civil court. [What's the difference between a civil and a criminal conviction?](#) There are different laws and a different court system. The same holds true with God. The *Great White Throne of Judgment* (which will take place after the Millennium period), will be a criminal court for the unsaved. The charges will be substantiated. Revelation 20:12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

The *Judgment Seat of Christ* (which will take place during the Tribulation Period), will be a civil court for the redeemed of God (the saved). Keep in mind that even though O. J. Simpson couldn't be sent to prison after being acquitted in his first trial, he was still ordered to pay \$8,500,000 in compensatory damages when convicted in civil court. Likewise, many believers who cannot be sent to Hell will indeed be ordered to pay compensatory and punitive damages to those whom they have hurt in this life.

[Laboring for Christ While We Can](#)

The Word "BEMA" is often mentioned in place of the word "judgment." Hence, the "Bema Seat of Christ." "Bema" is simply the Greek word meaning "place of judgment." When Jesus stood in Herod's court in judgment, the Bible uses the same Greek word "bema." It was a trial. When Paul stood trial before king Agrippa, the same word for judgment is used again. The *Judgment Seat of Christ* will NOT be a family reunion or social event, nor will it be a pleasant experience for MANY believers. It will be a JUDGMENT, with Jesus Christ sitting in the Judge's seat.

Though no believer will be in danger of being sentenced to Hell, many will suffer great loss and the wrath of God. King David was a believer, yet he feared God's wrath. Psalm 38:1..."O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure." Some believers really make God's blood boil. Though we won't be tried in criminal court at the *Great White Throne of Judgment*, we will all certainly be held accountable in civil court at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. Romans 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

In 1934 Dr. John R. Rice (1895-1980) launched THE SWORD OF THE LORD, which, by the time of his death, had become the largest independent religious weekly in the world, with subscribers in every state of the Union and more than 100 foreign countries. Thousands of preachers read it regularly, and it undoubtedly had the greatest impact upon the fundamentalist movement of any publication in the 20th century.

The following lengthy quote is from the faithful man of God, Dr. John R. Rice, from chapter 4 of the book, "WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS." The chapter is titled, "THE CHRISTIAN'S HAPPINESS IN HEAVEN DEPENDS ON HOW HE LIVED ON EARTH" ...

"AGAIN LET ME SAY that I do not encourage sin. No one must treat sin lightly. We are not soon done with the disaster of sin. The Christian who sins will suffer for it in this life. He will suffer for it in the life to come.

Some people suppose that every sinner who goes to Heaven will have the same joy and happiness. But that is not true. In Revelation 20, we find that sinners who go to hell are judged,



every man according to his works, according to the things written down in God's Books. The torment of unsaved people in hell will differ, each one according to his opportunity and according to his sin.

Likewise, the Bible makes it abundantly clear that not all Christians will enjoy the same position and have the same honor and responsibility and blessing in heaven. It is true that each one who trusts in Christ has the same salvation and goes to the same heaven. But beyond salvation there will be rewards for Christians according to their service, and Christians must give an account for their sins. Let no Christian think that he is getting by with his worldliness, his sin, his disobedience, his carelessness about soul-winning.

THE CHRISTIAN MUST MEET HIS DEEDS, GOOD AND BAD, AT CHRIST'S JUDGMENT SEAT

Read with me the shocking passage of Scripture in 2nd Corinthians 5:9-10:

'Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'

Here we know why Paul worked so hard, why he endured such persecution, gave up home, family, good name, ease, honors, in order to win souls. He was labouring to be acceptable to Jesus Christ! He knew that he would one day meet the Saviour and longed to have Jesus say to him, 'well done, good and faithful servant' (Mt 25:23). Paul says, 'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ' (2nd Co 5:10a). Do not confuse this with the final judgment of the unsaved as described in Revelation 20. Do not confuse this with the judgment of the Gentile world as described in Matthew 25:31-46. Here is a judgment, in heaven, of Christians only. After we are already caught up to meet the Lord in the air, after we have resurrected bodies, after we see the Saviour, then 'we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.'

And what occurs at this judgment seat of Christ?

'that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad' (2 Co 5:10b).

Do not explain away the plain statements of the Scriptures. The Christian is still to come face to face with his past. I know that the Christian has his sins forgiven as far as the destiny of his soul is concerned. It is true that all his sins are laid on Jesus and paid for on the cross. But God is still against sin. And up in heaven no Christian will think it did not matter that he sinned. Every Christian will find how horrible are the results of his sins. He will face what he has done, whether it be good or bad.

I do not wonder that, in the next verse, Paul says, 'Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade man' (2 CO 5:11). Paul knew that it would be a terrifying thing for Christians, born again, and even in glorified bodies, to stand up before Jesus Christ and give an account of the deeds done in the body both good and bad. In my sermon on 'Tears in Heaven' in the book *And God Remembered*, I have discussed the tears of Christians when they face their sins in heaven. And I hope you will read it.

God may forgive sins, but there are some of the results of sin that will never be undone..."

SOURCE: "WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS," John R. Rice; chapter 4, pgs. 60-62; copyright 1954, *Sword Of The Lord Publishers*; ISBN: 0-87398-911-2

Praying For One Another For Mercy At The Judgment

There's an amazing little truth tucked away in 2nd Timothy 1:16-18, The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well." Amen! I had never noticed this Scripture before until recently in 2012. The Bible says that Paul prayed for God to show mercy on his friend at the Judgment Seat Of Christ, because Onesiphorus helped him when he needed it the most. Evidently Paul was in some kind of legal trouble in Asia, because Paul mentions "my chain." [Paul said they despaired even of life](#) while in Asia, but Jesus Christ resurrects the dead.

The Foundation *Verses* The House Built Upon It

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for

the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" –1st Corinthians 3:11-15

It's important to keep in mind here that the Apostle Paul is writing to the believers at the church of Corinth. The Bible's not talking about the fool who built his house upon the sand as in Matthew 7:26-27. This passage of Scripture is speaking to those who already have a sure foundation, which is Jesus Christ. The Word of God proclaims that Jesus Christ is the ONLY true Foundation. The foolish man in Matthew 7:26-27 represents the unsaved man who fails to place His trust in Christ for salvation. His destruction is imminent. However, 1st Corinthians 3:11-15 is speaking to the man who has already placed his faith in Christ, he is a born-again believer; however, he is foolishly building upon the foundation with shabby and unreliable materials. In other words, only that which we do for Christ will last.

Let me illustrate. Matthew 7:26-27 is likened to a man who decides to build his house in a low-lying flood zone or on the muddy slope of a mountain side. He's taking great risks, and foolish one's I might add. I've always wondered why people keep building homes in areas that they know are prone to flooding, forest fires, mud slides, et cetera. People often spend extravagantly on their home, but they have NO sure foundation. I've seen mansions on the news go sliding down the side of a mountain from excessive rains. **"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:27).** This pictures the unsaved person who builds their faith upon self-righteousness works. Notice that they are building a home, but it is not built upon the foundation of faith in Jesus Christ.

Now the man in 1st Corinthians 3:11-15 is likened to a man who builds a solid concrete foundation in a stable land area, but then he uses inferior materials and poor design to build the house. He uses flammable materials, not thinking about potential loss from fire. He employs cheap and unskilled labor to assemble the home. He is penny wise, and dollar foolish. He has a solid foundation, but decides to use straw instead of concrete to build the house. Surely you remember the story of the three little pigs? I've oftentimes seen wooden homes that have burned to the ground replaced with concrete homes. It just makes better sense to build with concrete and brick. Most Christians are building their spiritual houses out of straw and mud. In areas which are prone to hurricanes or typhoons, wise people build their homes out of concrete. Thousands of wooden homes are often destroyed during tropical storms.

So we have two types of homeowners here: the man who has a solid house, but a shabby foundation (this pictures the unsaved man); and then the man who has a shabby house, but a solid foundation (this pictures the worldly believer who does nothing for God).

Don't Point Fingers (because there's 3 fingers pointing back at you)

No one is going to fool God on Judgment Day. Proverb 24:12, **"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man**

according to his works?" God knows who is sincere and who is not. There won't be any need for juries in Heaven, because the eyes of Lord are upon the evil and the good. God is omniscient (knowing all). God ponders (i.e., thinks at length and in depth) upon our every thought. God ponders the thoughts of all estimated 6,800,000,000 people on the earth, as only God can do. This is why Jesus warned in Matthew 12:36 that God will hold men accountable even for the very words they speak. No one is going to escape God's judgment. All evil and good will be accounted for. The best part is that no one will be able to deceive God, nor lie up a storm, for God knows all.

I've always thought of Proverb 24:16 as being directed to the righteous, but it's not. This is the Scripture that says a righteous man falleth seven times and riseth up again. Most people don't read the verse before... **Proverb 24:15-16, "Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place: For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."** That is very interesting. God is warning the unrighteous man not to condemn nor assassinate the character of an imperfect Christian, because even the best of Christians falter continually. The number 7 represents God's number for perfection. Thus, 7 here refers to a person who fails and fails and fails at living right; but they get back up and sincerely keep trying to get it right.

In other words, a righteous person falters while they're climbing up the ladder; but they keep climbing anyway. The wicked don't even get on the ladder because they don't care. All they do is criticize and condemn the man who keeps falling and slipping on the rungs of the ladder. God says in Proverb 24:15 to leave the man on the ladder alone, because at least he's trying to stay on the ladder.

Note that this has absolutely nothing to do with salvation. Eternal life is a free gift from God, paid in full by Jesus Christ with His precious literal blood (1st Peter 1:18,19). We live right because WE ARE saved; **not** to get saved. As Christians, all we can do is purpose in our heart to live right (Daniel 1:8), memorize Scriptures that we might not sin against God (Psalm 119:11), pray that we enter not into temptation (Matthew 26:41), and put on the whole armour of God (Ephesians 6:13-18). If we do these things, then we can be victorious over sin at any given time; however, we won't always do these things because we are sinful by nature as human beings (Jeremiah 17:9).

Proverb 24:29, Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work." We must let God sort our enemies out. God will sort 'em out! God pondereth the hearts of all men and women, and knows every minute detail. If justice is due, then God will avenge us as He hath promised in 1st Thessalonians 4:6 (and vice versa). The important thing is to keep serving God and place our enemies into God's hands. This is what God wants us to do (Romans 14:10). Matthew 7:2, **"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."**

Building A Shabby House

The second man in the above illustration represents MOST believers, they are building a shabby house upon a solid foundation. There are six items mentioned in 1st Corinthians 3:12: gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble. In my opinion, the first three items refer to the riches of this life (the pursuit of a career, the desire to buy things, the desire to travel, own a home, buy a car, hobbies, materialism, et cetera). The second

three items in my opinion refer to the temporal pleasures of this life (eating, drinking, marriage, etc).

The wise and knowledgeable believer realizes that all these things will amount to nothing when we enter Heaven. ONLY that which we do for Jesus' sake or the gospel's will matter then. Consider carefully the words of **Mark 4:18-19**, "**And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.**" Sadly, this Scripture describes 95% of all born-again believers today. Here's some shabby and weak building materials:

The Love of Money

I've known many believers who sold-out for a career, selling *Amway*, selling *A.L. Williams* life insurance, or some other dead-end pursuit. When it comes to money, many professed Christians are no different than the wicked heathen. I hate to say it, but I don't place ANY confidence in people anymore just because they profess to be a Christian. I've seen too many Christians get all excited when they thought they were about to make lots of money, but couldn't have cared less about soul winning.

I once had a boss (Mike) who professed to be a Christian. He became very involved with *Prepaid Legal Services* (a scam). He was so excited and wanted to share information about it with me. He asked me to watch some videos in his office, gave me fliers to read, and did his best to sucker me into the business. I had more sense than that and told him I wasn't interested. After about a month of watching Mike's excitement, determination, and the gleam in his eyes over making money, I was really frustrated. I was frustrated that so many professed Christians get hog wild excited about making filthy lucre (which we can't take with us), but they don't even have a twitch of enthusiasm when it comes to sharing the Gospel with others (which will last for eternity).

I remember Mike drove all the way to Oklahoma for a big nationwide *Prepaid Legal Services* pep-rally. All they did at the meeting was listen to one member after another brag about all the money they are making. Although they strongly deny it's a pyramid scam, it functions just the same. The more people you recruit to sell, the more money you make. I never saw Mike more happy than when he came back from that meeting in Oklahoma with dollar signs flashing in his eyes. Oh, if only believers today would get just as excited over winning lost souls to Jesus.

I don't ever want money to mean that much to me. I could sell all kinds of things on this website if I wanted to, but I never will. I don't sell anything. I do this for God. I don't care if people like my website or not, it's for God. I am leery of Christian websites that hound you on every page to buy something. I have a problem with that kind of Christianity. Making money is a very deceitful trap which too many believers have become ensnared into (1st Timothy 6:8-10). Such covetous and greedy believers will give account to God one day at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*.

Selfish and Worldly Interests

Luke 21:34 states, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Oh how many Christians are asleep at the wheel during this present dark hour! It's repulsive to see professed born again "Christians" twanging their worldly guitars, making money from their worldly arts, and yet never publicly telling anyone how to be saved. I know of several musicians who profess themselves to be "Christian," but all they do is twang their worldly pedal steel guitar music all across America. They yoke together with unbelievers. They drink the devil's alcohol.

They are surrounded by improperly dressed women. They use their God-given talents to draw people into the nightclubs and bars to drink case after case of booze, where the name of God is cursed. Is this what Jesus meant when He told us to bare our cross? - Mark 8:34, "...Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." When do these people live for God? They don't! They're lives are filled with "Me, Myself, and I." Of course, they make their little charitable contributions so they can feel good about themselves and impress their friends. Listen friend, God doesn't want your pocketbook...He wants you!

Amy Grant has influenced millions of young people for Satan by leading them into worldly music and never presenting the gospel to them. Please read [Amy Grant-Exposed!](#) (Amy says, "I'm a singer, not a preacher...I'M NOT LOOKING TO CONVERT ANYBODY"). These will be some of the woefully ashamed believers at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*.

Wrong Priorities

There are many hardworking and generous Christian people in this world doing all sorts of charitable things, but it all means absolutely nothing if the people you are helping go to Hell without Christ as their Saviour. I recently heard on the news that Donald Trump and "All" detergent company are going to be raising millions of dollars for the *Salvation Army*. That's nice, but what about God? The *Salvation Army* has become more army than salvation. The world is filled with professed "Christian" charities that carry no cross, preach no Gospel, and do nothing for God. Don't the leaders at the *Salvation Army* understand? The world is going to Hell without Christ!!! All Christ-rejecters WILL burn in Hell one day according to John 3:18, 2nd Thessalonians 1:8,9 and Revelation 20:15. Why isn't the "Salvation" Army preaching the Gospel anymore?

I triple-dog dare you to go to ANY of their websites and show me where they appeal to anyone to come to Christ for salvation. They've been choked by the cares and riches of this world. What good is it to give a cup of hot-chocolate to a thirsty fireman if you don't share the Gospel with him? It is tragic! Show me ANY *Salvation Army* website where they give a clear Gospel presentation. In fact, here's the [official National Headquarters' Salvation Army website](#).

There's NOTHING concerning the Gospel even mentioned. Look in their "beliefs" menu and you'll find absolutely nothing concerning the Gospel. What a shame! They are unfaithful servants! William Booth is brokenhearted saddened up in Heaven. The *Salvation Army* fat cats will have to give account to God for their failure to win souls on Judgment Day. The *Salvation Army* can testify before God how they helped so many people in this lifetime, while allowing the very same people to go into eternal damnation without ever hearing the Gospel preached.

Every believer has a solid foundation in Jesus Christ (We are going to Heaven and nothing can alter that fact). However, if we build upon that foundation with worldliness and shallow pursuits, we will suffer great loss at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. Only that which we do in Jesus' name and for the Gospel will be rewarded.

Hurting Others

"That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified." –1st Thessalonians 4:6

We are warned from God's Word about defrauding one another. The Greek meaning of the word "defraud" in 1st Thessalonians 4:6 is "to take advantage of; to make a gain." We are NOT to take advantage of anyone. A person who makes a promise and breaks it has defrauded his neighbor (every human being is our neighbor). A man who commits adultery with a married woman has defrauded that woman's husband (and vice-versa). A person who lies, cheats or reneges on a business agreement has defrauded someone(s). A man who mistreats his wife and children has defrauded them. Notice that God warns us not to defraud anyone, "...**IN ANY MATTER**..." This includes ALL types of wrong doing. Notice the phrase "...**go beyond**..."

We could read this as "That no man cross the line and defraud another person." There is a definite line between right and wrong! They're might be a fine line between faith and foolishness, but there is a definite line between right and wrong. We know when we are doing wrong! People like to pretend that they are innocent, but they know in their conniving hearts what they have done. They can try to live in denial, but God will repay (punish) them in His own time and way. **"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19).** This is a promise from God—He WILL REPAY! God's integrity is at stake here, He must right ALL wrongs. The Greek word for "repay" means "to punish." If someone has wronged you, there MUST be restitution. God will execute justice.

When we trust Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are forgiven of ALL our sins (past, present and future). **Psalm 103:12, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."** Yet, the sin itself must be judged. The damages that our sin causes cannot be ignored. It would be injustice for God to allow anyone to get away with anything (Galatians 6:7). Just because Jesus forgives your sins doesn't mean that the guy you cheated is out of luck. God has to make that wrong right if you don't. Now Jesus died upon the cross to pay for our sins so we could be free, but the Lord has to right our wrongs as well.

A good example of injustice is the U.S. government. The blatant injustices committed by our entrusted leaders are appalling. On Bill Clinton's last day in office as President of the U.S., he pardoned an unprecedented 200 criminals. Trillions of dollars are missing from the Defense Department's budget. No weapons-of-mass-destruction were ever found in Iraq, yet American troops have killed over 1,200,000 innocent Iraqis in a war which was only supposed to remove Saddam from power. Our nation's borders have deliberately remained wide open for years. The criminals of *Enron* never went to prison. Where is justice? This is exactly what Jesus was talking about in **Matthew 24:12**, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." "Iniquity" means "injustice."

Doesn't it make you mad that the government gets away with so much evil and there's hardly anything we can do about it? Sure it does! Read the book, *Mugged By The State*. Do you think God is going to allow them to get away with that? No! Now if some of those evil people get saved, they will be forgiven. God will accept them as they are to be saved. But the damage caused by their sins must be reconciled. If they don't reconcile with their victims, then God will have to do it for them. That is justice!

Let me illustrate. Let's say you're an immature believer and you cheat me. I trust you to do something agreed upon, but you knife me in the back instead. You steal \$5,000 from me. You are stubborn and refuse to pay me back. There was nothing in writing, so I have no recourse. Besides, I am not supposed to take you to court before heathen judges (1st Corinthians 6:1-7). You could care less, and my family is out \$5,000. In addition, you didn't live up to your end of the agreement and so I have to pay someone else to do what I paid you to do. So now my loss is actually \$10,000. My family is out \$10,000!

Do you think you won't have to give account for your evil in Heaven? Jesus shed His blood to pay for your sins so you wouldn't have to burn in Hell, but the sins you commit still have to be accounted for (Romans 14:12). Listen to the wise words of Dr. John R. Rice:

"At the judgment seat of Christ God's anger is not expressed against any individual who has thoroughly repented of his sins, confessed them and forsaken them. But God's judgment on the sin itself may continue where there is no judgment against the individual as such. It seems to me that we need to make a distinction between the proper anger and wrath of God against one who goes on unrepentant in sin, and God's proper wise judgment against the sin itself even when the sinner has been reconciled completely and forgiven." —Dr. John R. Rice, from the excellent book *Dr. Rice, Here's My Question*.

The TRUTH is that God has to balance the scales of injustice. By the way, it doesn't matter whether you're saved or not, all the sins you commit have to be dealt with. The difference is that as a believer, you have a Great Lawyer, Jesus Christ. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1st John 2:1). If you're not saved, you're on your own on Judgment Day. Just as in today's world, you're unfortunate and unwise to go into court without an experienced lawyer. God promises to punish those who have hurt others.

Romans 12:19 and 1st Thessalonians 4:6 CLEARLY warn us that God will AVENGE anyone who has been defrauded or hurt in any way. Remember, the soul of a saved person is forever secure and nothing can jeopardize that; however, our rewards and happiness in Heaven will directly depend upon the life we live here on earth. There will be tears in Heaven. At the end of the Millennium, all tears will finally be wiped away from believers eyes and the former things will be forgotten (Revelation 21:4).

“Motives” NOT mentioned in Bible

"But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." —Matthew 21:28-31

The son with the bad attitude went into the field and pleased the father. The son with the good attitude didn't go. Jesus said that many who are first shall be last, and last first. It's not the religious elite who do nothing for God who will be rewarded in Heaven, but the unsung heroes who do their best to win lost sinners to Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the Word of God are we told that we have to have the right motives to serve the Lord. God's not looking for special ops forces, he's looking for willing combatants, soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The TRUTH is that God will reward us for every little thing we do for Jesus' sake and the Gospels. Also, the Word of God declares that God will hold us accountable for every idle word spoken (Matthew 12:36). No one is going to get away with any sin. And likewise for the Christian, no good deed done in Jesus' name will go unrewarded. The Bible promises us in Mark 10:29-30, "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." I see nothing mentioned about "motives." The truth is that God will reward us for everything we do for Jesus. Our labors are never in vain for the Lord. 1st Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Matthew 10:42 reads "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Wow! Even if I do something for a disciple of Christ, I will still be rewarded. If I promote the sermons of a Gospel preacher, I will be rewarded. If I help someone who is serving God, I will be rewarded. If I give to a Gospel missionary, I will be rewarded. So even if your motive is only to help a friend, if that friend is serving God you will be rewarded. Even if our motives are selfish, God will reward us if we are furthering the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We've got ministries all across America with the right motives, but the wrong priorities (like the *Salvation Army*). I'd rather cheer for the guy with the selfish motives who's out preaching the Gospel on a street corner! Souls are

dying!

Is God Less Righteous?

Do not think for one moment that God will allow anyone to have a flippant, "So what if I don't get any rewards," attitude. I have teens of my own. Sometimes I have to scold them for not cleaning the house. I usually start by taking away a privilege such as the internet. If that doesn't seem to matter to them, then I take away another privilege such as going outside to play. Whatever it takes to break their bad spirit is what I give them. If they give me "the attitude," then I ground them and take away all their privileges for a set time. Now do you think God is any less just to deal with our wrongs?

Do you think God is going to allow any of His children to have a careless attitude about the people they have hurt? Do you think that God is going to just pass out rewards like Santa Claus and not say anything about the people you have wronged? About the tears YOU CAUSED? About your stiffnecked pride? No sir, there will be many tears in Heaven. No matter what my children do, they are still my children; however, they need to be chastised when they do wrong because I love them. Likewise, Jesus will chastise believers at the *Judgment Seat of Christ* in Fatherly love. All wrongs will be righted.

Thankfully, God gives us the chance to make things right here on earth, to avoid embarrassment and chastisement at The Judgment Seat of Christ. **1st Corinthians 11:31**, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." This means going to the person(s) we have wronged, apologizing, and giving them back the money we took from them, or restoring to them what they lost because of our sin. We must seek reconciliation with anyone whom we've defrauded or hurt. And likewise, those who have hurt and cheated us are required by God to reconcile and pay us back; otherwise God will deal with them harshly on Judgment Day.

Hebrews 12:6 teaches us that God chastises His children. This very fact alone should remove any question in your mind as to whether or not God will harshly judge believers at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. Not every believer will be dealt with harshly, but the tyrants and bullies most certainly will. Do you think Jesus will go gentle on the saved husband who has brutally beat his frail wife repeatedly for decades? Do you think Jesus will go easy on those saved fathers who have been ruthless towards their children? EACH individual will be judged according to their unique circumstances and works.

Everything will be taken into account. Nothing is hidden from the eyes of the Lord (Proverb 15:3). A clear distinction needs to be made between the punishment of the unsaved at the *Great White Throne of Judgment*, and the chastisement of God's children at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. The unsaved will be punished, as guilty criminals being sent to prison. In contrast; God's children will be judged, likened to a stern father taking the necessary measures (tough love) to do what needs to be done to be fair, but also to resolve the matter. All disputes must be resolved. There's a lot of believers angry at a lot of believers. God cannot just look the other way or tell us to "let it go," nor does He expect us to. It is proper and Biblical to request for God to avenge us of those who defraud or hurt us. All wrongs must be righted.

Crawling At The Feet Of Jesus

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." –Romans 14:10-12

We need not be angry or bitter towards those immature believers who have hurt us, their day of judgment WILL come or else the Word of God is a lie. Galatians 6:7 declares that God will not be mocked—a man will reap that which he sows! Notice that Romans 14:10 speaks of "standing" before Christ in judgment, and then the very next verse speaks of being on our "knees," crying out in confession to God. Then the next verse says we will give account. If you've ever been into a courtroom, then you KNOW that the utmost in respect is demanded for the Judge. You don't dare speak or show even the slightest disrespect for the judge or else you'll face charges of contempt. Do you think it will be anything less in God's court? Do you think Jesus will be nice to some "tough guy" in His presence? Oh listen friend, you'll see the meanest and toughest tyrant falling down upon their hands and knees in tears begging for mercy, and Jesus will show them the same kind of mercy they showed their victims... none.

Matthew 25:24-30 is a parable concerning the unsaved, but it reveals a principle concerning God's judgment... much of our judgment will be based upon our own attitudes. God will not deal harshly with those believers who have made restitution to their victims and repented of their sins. However, the Word of God clearly teaches that we must make things right with those whom we have defrauded or hurt before we can be right with God. **"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."** (Matthew 5:23-24).

Can a person be saved before making reconciliation with those whom they have hurt? Yes, of course! This is because salvation is of God and not man. Can a child of God be right with God without making reconciliation with those whom they have hurt? No! This is because reconciliation is our responsibility. If you do not make things right down here, then God will have to make them right up there, but you won't like the consequences. Why should someone have to wait a lifetime to be avenged of your evils?

"Our salvation was settled by our acceptance of Jesus, but now we are to be judged for our works and service. Paul tells us that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. No Christian will escape; therefore, the apostle reminds us that we are not to waste our time judging our brethren, for the time of their judgment is coming when they must stand before the judgment seat of Christ." –Dr. Lee Roberson, [Chapter 2, Some Golden Daybreak](#).

For those believers who refuse to right their wrongs now, the *Judgment Seat of Christ* will be a very UN-pleasant experience. The same holds true for those believers who live worldly lives, refuse to take up their cross, and never do anything to reach lost sinners with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such believers will face **THE TERROR OF THE LORD** (2nd Corinthians 5:11).

Tears In Heaven (by Evangelist Phil Kidd)

What Happens to Believers Who Hurt Others?

The Judgment Seat of Christ (by Dr. Douglas D. Shauffer)

Defraud NOT Thy Brother! | **Justice**

